



County of Fresno

County of Madera

February 26, 2013

Ken Alex, Director
Office of Planning & Research
1400 Tenth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

SUBJECT: Office of Planning & Research Offer to Meet and Discuss Local Land Use and Transportation Matters

Dear Mr. Alex:

We would like to thank you, your staff, and staff from the Strategic Growth Council for visiting with us to discuss planning issues relating to Fresno and Madera Counties. In addition, we appreciate your email of February 13, 2013, suggesting that additional meetings be convened with the State Office of Planning & Research and local jurisdictions to further discuss land use and transportation issues as well as fiscal impacts of local land use decisions. While both Fresno and Madera Counties welcome these discussions, we however firmly believe that these matters are best discussed and resolved at the local level amongst local elected officials and our respective planning staffs.

To this end, Fresno and Madera Counties will be conducting a joint meeting to discuss regional planning issues, and issues of common interest to both jurisdictions. The joint meeting has been scheduled for March 19, 2013. Each of the cities from Fresno and Madera Counties will be invited to attend and participate. It is our mutual hope that the joint meeting, and other similar meetings as determined necessary, will foster increased communication, a better understanding of each jurisdiction's planned land development and fiscal strategies, and enhanced coordination among our respective jurisdictions.

Once again, thank you for your interest and offer for assistance, however, we will be addressing these matters directly with our local partners. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact John Navarrette, Fresno County Administrative Officer at (559) 600-1710 or Eric Fleming, Madera County Administrative Officer at (559) 675-7703.

Sincerely,

John Navarrette
Fresno County Administrative Officer

Sincerely,

Eric Fleming
Madera County Administrative Officer



EDMOND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH



KEN ALEX
DIRECTOR

March 4, 2013

John Navarette
Fresno County Administrative Officer
Hall of Records
2281 Tulare Street, Room 304
Fresno, CA 93721

Eric Fleming
Madera County Administrative Officer
200 W. 4th Street, 4th Fl.
Madera, CA 93637

Re: Fresno Area Land Use Issues

Dear Mr. Fleming and Mr. Navarette:

Thank you for your letter dated February 26, 2013. We were surprised and, I must say, disappointed that the Counties of Madera and Fresno are foreclosing participation of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research in the effort to find workable solutions to the land use and related disputes in the greater Fresno/Madera area. After extensive discussions with business, farming, development, community, and government stakeholders, we concluded that the state could plan a constructive role in helping to resolve the complex set of disputes confronting the city and counties. We certainly understand and respect your interest and efforts in resolving issues locally. Nonetheless, in our meetings with interested parties, we were impressed both with the goodwill of all parties and with the recognition that the state could bring important resources to the discussion.

Our meetings also underscored how closely tied are the state, regional, and local interests in the Fresno area. State goals, which the region shares, include preservation of prime farm land, improved business conditions, reduction of vehicle miles traveled, improved public transit, transit oriented development, and regional housing availability. And, of course, under SB 375 and the Strategic Community Strategies, multiple state agencies have a role in ensuring a regional approach that meets state benchmarks. State and federal transit and transportation funding and air quality attainment are tied to these efforts. Now with AB 32 funding, greenhouse gas reduction efforts in greater Fresno are also tied to the regional and state plans. Siting of the high speed rail station in the City of Fresno means that issues of transit oriented

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development, connectivity, and farm land preservation and all tied inextricably among the state, regional, and local levels of government.

Just as an example, the state is uniquely positioned to work with the region on requirements under the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. We can help with regional concepts of revenue sharing. We anticipate that the development of the high speed rail and the Fresno station will provide new opportunities for the region through efforts such as the Regional Advanced Mitigation Plan, which can focus on farm land preservation. The Sustainable Communities Strategy process will also provide state resources. Of course, Caltrans is directly involved in issues concerning Route 41 and how that artery serves the area.

We mention all of this to suggest that the Counties not dismiss out of hand the potential for a constructive state role. We are concerned that rather than resolving the difficult set of issues confronting the Fresno/Madera region, positions will become hardened, further litigation will ensue, and regional opportunities for greater economic opportunity will be lost.

In addition, as we mentioned to all parties, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research can provide assistance with modeling and scenario planning which would allow the review and comparison of multiple creative land use planning solutions that might support mutual interests. The State may be able to find the resources for local and regional partners for these tasks. Regardless of any other state role, we believe that these resources will benefit whatever process you choose to use in resolving land use disputes in the Fresno/Madera region, and we will provide them regardless of how you otherwise choose to proceed. We believe that these services will benefit the SB 375 process as well.

We hope that you will reconsider the state's role and, at the very least, that you will use some of our modeling and scenario planning capacity to identify the best regional approaches to the issues. We appreciate your efforts, and all of our discussions, and we hope that as things move forward you will reconsider the value that the state may be able to bring to this process.

Sincerely,

Ken Alex
Director